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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/058,264	01/29/2002	Koji Tomioka	NEC01P260-HYa	4190

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EXAMINER

KOROBV, VITALI A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2155

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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09/11/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/058,264

Applicant(s)

TOMIOKA, KOJI

Examiner

Vitali Korobov

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to an amendment filed by the Applicant on 06/11/2007. Claims 1, 2, 13, 14 and 16 were amended. No claims were added or cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1-24 are currently pending and have been examined in this Office Action.

Election/Restrictions

This application, as amended, contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention: Species 1 (a clustered computer system, wherein I/O control apparatuses do not comprise communication means to transmit a response to I/O instruction issued by at least one CPU and memory); Species 2 (a clustered computer system, wherein I/O control apparatuses comprise communication means to transmit a response to I/O instruction issued by at least one CPU and memory); Species 3 (a computer system, comprising no clustering and no network).

Related inventions are distinct if the inventions as claimed are not connected in at least one of design, operation, or effect (e.g., can be made by, or used in, a materially different process) and wherein at least one invention is patentable (novel and nonobvious) over the other (though they may each be unpatentable over the prior art). See MPEP § 802.01(II).

In the instant case, the Species 1, 2 and 3 are not connected in at least design and the mode of operation. The clustered computer system of Species 1 comprises I/O

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control apparatuses that appear to be designed for one-way communication and do not comprise communication means to transmit a response to I/O instruction issued by at least one CPU and memory. The clustered computer system of Species 2 comprises I/O control apparatuses that appear to be designed for two-way communication and do comprise communication means to transmit a response to I/O instruction issued by at least one CPU and memory. The computer system of Species 3 does not appear to be a clustered computer system and does not comprise any network. Instead, the communication is performed via a communication cable.

For the reasons, given above, the Examiner has determined that the Species 1-3 differ in design and the mode of operation from one another in ways that would not be obvious to one of ordinary skills in the art at the time the invention was made.

Therefore, Species 1-8 are patentably distinct from one another, though they may each be unpatentable over the prior art. Further, for the reasons stated above, the Species 1-3 impose an additional search burden in order to perform proper examination of the instant application.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, no claim appears to be generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim

is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

In the interest of advancing the prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner has performed a preliminary search on the claims directed to Species 2 and has determined that these claims would be allowable, provided that claims directed to Species 1 and 3 are cancelled, and the scope of parallel claims directed to CPU and memory, and to the I/O control apparatuses is brought in line with the computer system claims directed to Species 2. However, the final decision regarding allowability of the

instant application will depend entirely on the Applicant's election of a given Species for examination and updated search of the elected claims.

A telephone call was made to the applicant's representative (Mr. Donald J. Lecher, Reg. No. 41,933) on August 30th, 2007 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made.

Applicant is given **ONE (1) MONTH, or THIRTY (30) DAYS** from the mailing date of this communication, whichever is longer, within which to respond to this election/restriction requirement in order to avoid abandonment (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of this time period may be granted under 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vitali Korobov whose telephone number is 571-272-7506. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Friday 8a.m. - 4:30p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Saleh Najjar can be reached on (571)272-4006. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Vitali Korobov
Examiner
Art Unit 2155

VAK
09/03/2007



SALEH NAJJAR
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER